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General Assembly

Official Records

Disarmament Commission

262nd meeting

Friday, 16 April 2004, 10 a.m.

New York

Chairman: Mr. Adamia ..... (Georgia)

The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

Organization of work

The Chairman: We are continuing our work on this so-called substantive session of the Disarmament Commission. I have to note a very good thing that is happening outside this building: the weather is improving. I hope that will be extrapolated to this room.

I have to inform delegations that yesterday we had a Bureau meeting. At least one point became absolutely clear in that meeting: adjourning the session in this situation is impossible. That is because the only way to adjourn the session is by consensus among delegations, and there are a number of delegations against adjourning at this stage of the session. We therefore have to continue our work. I would say that I, personally, am still optimistic, although time for that optimism tends to grow shorter and shorter.

Anyway, we have a proposal by the Chairman, although I reiterate that it is the result of the collective work of a number of delegations. It could be taken as a basis for future work. That gives me some optimism, as I said. I understand that all delegations now have that proposal, although I certainly understand that not all delegations can express their position on that proposal. It was clear the day before yesterday that a number of delegations will need information from their capitals. So, I would be delighted if we could hear the opinions of the delegations, if more information has been available from the capitals.

Mrs. Martinic (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation is taking the floor to make a general statement on behalf of the member countries of the South American Common Market (MERCOSUR) Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay and the associated countries Bolivia, Chile and Peru, as well as on behalf of Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador and Guatemala, which also associate themselves with this statement.

First, I wish to state the importance our countries attach to the present deliberations and our hope that, despite the state of those deliberations, we will achieve the necessary consensus on the substantive items of the Commission's agenda. We trust that the frank and constructive exchange of ideas provided by this forum will enable us to achieve that objective. In that context, I reaffirm the readiness of our delegations to collaborate in every way necessary to that end.

Secondly, we cannot fail to recognize that over the past decade, the Disarmament Commission has made valuable contributions in disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. In that context, our delegations believe that we should set rhetoric aside and continue and even increase our efforts with a view to continue making progress in this area.

Finally, we are convinced that the new international reality requires effective multilateralism in order to focus on specific problems. Creating a constructive environment requires the full commitment, the practical participation, the political will and the courage of the entire international

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community in order to take the necessary decisions. Because its deliberative and pre-negotiating nature, the Disarmament Commission provides an appropriate framework for exploring possibilities for progress in disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. Therefore, our countries wish to reaffirm their full support for and commitment to the work of this important forum.

The Chairman: I should like to share with members my thoughts on how to proceed further. As we all understand — and as our Argentine colleague just emphasized — we are striving to find a consensus or an outcome for our deliberations and discussions during the past months. Bearing in mind that we have only one week left, we must start to think about the report that the Commission must present to the General Assembly. Certainly, together with the Secretariat, we will begin to draft the report describing our work, and I hope that we will have a draft report by early next week.

I believe we can have a formal meeting on Monday morning in the hope that, by that time, a number of delegations will have clearer views on the Chairman's proposal. I remain optimistic that it will be possible to achieve some kind of consensus on the substantive items. If that is not possible, on Monday or Tuesday, after the Bureau meeting, we will discuss how we should proceed. I strongly encourage delegations to have discussions among themselves. We are available to delegations for discussion any time today, and I will be in my office over the weekend. I urge delegations to bear in mind that the weather is improving and that we must find a way to follow that trend.

The meeting rose at 10.45 a.m.